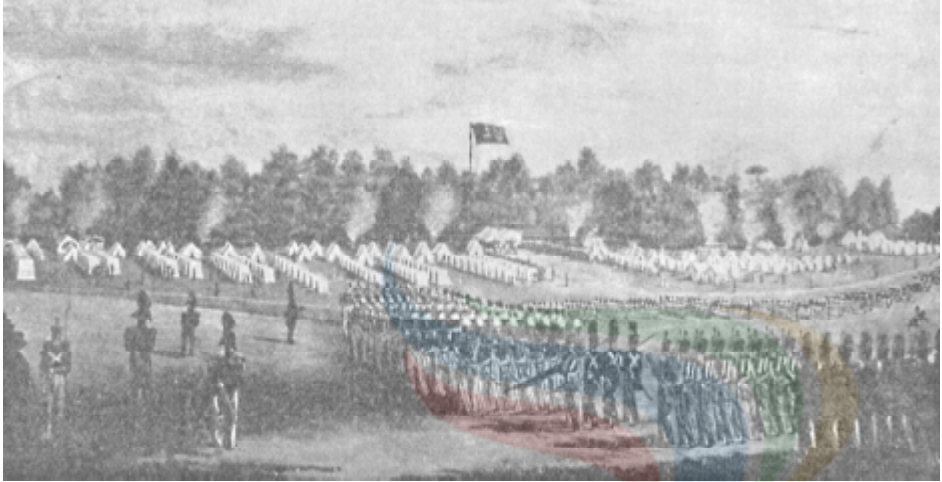


THE NATIONAL GUARD OF PENNSYLVANIA AND ITS ANTECEDENTS.

BY CAPT. C. A. BOOTH, 7TH INF., U. S. A.



CAMP WAYNE, 1840.

THE religious views of the illustrious founder of Pennsylvania led to the settlement of many Quakers within the limits of his grant so entirely opposed to everything military, that the omission from the articles of his "Concessions" to the settlers of all reference to a militia is not surprising, although the Royal Charter of Charles II. to William Penn gave him power "to levy, muster, and train all sorts of men . . . and to make war . . . as fully and freely as any captain-general of an army hath ever had the same."

The peace-loving Quaker provided for the adjustment of disputes between the settlers and the natives (then the only apparent source of danger) by reference to twelve men—six settlers and six natives. Under this policy of arbitration, there appears to have been no necessity for the organization of an armed force for many years, but as time passed and the settlements extended farther from their starting point, the same causes which have always led to wars showed themselves more and more, with the inevitable result—fighting men,

"militia," and eventually "soldiers." Of the gradual growth of the latter, the legislation which provided for them and the accompanying incidents, the limits of this article preclude extended mention. The first call came for men and money to secure the frontier of New York in 1693, but the Assembly refused men, while granting £760.

At this time the first effort to establish a militia by law appears to have been made;* a bill having been introduced to that effect, which passed a first reading, but was negatived when next called up.

Some apprehension seems to have been felt by the Lieutenant-Governor in 1702, for his message of November eighteenth in that year says: "What I have chiefly to recommend to you is the providing against what may annoy us by land or by sea. . . . The means, under God, used in other colonies, is by law to establish a militia, which is also necessary to be by law established in this province and territories." A militia com-

*All references to the efforts in this direction under the Dutch, Swedes and English, prior to the time of William Penn, are omitted, as they were without influence in the later course of military events.

pany was formed in Philadelphia, with George Lowther as captain (though the Assembly took no action), which appears to have existed for some years, but only the most meager references to it can be found. On May seventeenth, 1704, it was ordered by the Governor and Council, "That all persons who enlist themselves and serve in the militia . . . shall be exempt from watch and ward." This order caused friction between the Governor and the Mayor of Philadelphia, but the militia held the field.

Governor Evans attempted to arouse the colonists to a sense of the necessity for an armed force in 1706, by a false alarm, but as this proved ineffectual he renewed the request for a militia to the Assembly. This, as well as a request for means of defence in 1708, by Governor Evans, and a like request from his successor in the same year, only evoked the reply that they "could not *in conscience* provide money to hire men to kill each other."

The proprietor of the province in 1718 (William Penn) seems to have become convinced of the necessity for an organized and armed force, for in that year he wrote to Governor Keith, "If you can procure a militia to be settled by law, slip not the occasion of doing it." In accordance with this recommendation a bill was passed (1720) which permitted a militia, while recommending that the Governor would "take care that the militia service should be voluntary, and that the peace of the inhabitants towards each other should be preserved." I can find no record of any organization under this bill.

Nothing effective was in existence when the troubles between England and Spain culminated in open war (1739) and a call for men to go to West Indies was made upon Pennsylvania, and the Governor was instructed to allow designated parties to "beat up for volunteers."

The Assembly made no provision for raising or providing for the troops called for, though seven companies were raised in three months (1740), which proceeded to the Capes of Virginia. Here the expedition ended and the troops returned.

When hostilities broke out between France and England in 1744, which menaced the province, a meeting was called in Philadelphia by Benjamin Franklin, and a plan for a military association was laid before it. Under this

plan ten thousand volunteers were soon secured, armed at their own expense, and having officers of their own Choice, Franklin was chosen colonel of a Philadelphia regiment, but declined to serve.

A battery was also erected below Philadelphia from funds raised by a lottery, and by voluntary contributions. This organization was soon found to be inadequate; the natives, too, were becoming restless under the encroachments of the settlers, and the Assembly on June twentieth, 1746, presented a bill to the Governor for "the better ordering and regulating such as are willing and desirous to be united for military purposes." This bill was approved by Governor Morris, through fear of personal violence in case of disapproval—amongst other threatening elements being "500 Dutch from Berks,"—but it appears to have been disapproved by the higher powers in England.

In May, 1746, the Assembly voted £5,000 in aid of an attempt at the conquest of Canada, with which four companies of over one hundred men each were raised and sent to Albany. The attempt was abandoned, but the troops were kept on the Hudson for eighteen months to overawe the northern Indians.

Incursions of Indians from the west and north, with the accompanying horrors of savage warfare, made organization for frontier defence necessary, and several companies of quasi-militia ("Rangers") were formed for mutual protection, though as late as August ninth, 1755, Governor Morris stated to the Assembly: "This province is still without a militia or the necessary means of defence," and called upon it to take measures to remedy this deficiency, repeating the substance of this, more emphatically, twelve days later in a second message. Some of these Rangers appear to have formed part of Braddock's ill-fated expedition of 1755, acting as pioneers. In the general alarm after this expedition the Assembly seems to have been finally aroused to the necessity for troops for the defence of the frontier, and a bill was passed October fourteenth, 1755, providing that "from and after the publication of this act it shall be lawful for the freemen of this province to form themselves into companies, as heretofore they have used in time of war without law, and for each company to choose its own officers."

Under this bill the Governor assigned companies to regiments, and the officers of the several companies chose the colonel, lieutenant-colonel, and major of the regiment. Officers were to be commissioned by the Governor. The Governor, with the field officers, constituted a board to prepare articles of war, and to constitute courts-martial to hear, try and determine offences against these articles. These articles of war were to be printed and distributed to captains of companies, to be by them distinctly read to their respective companies; all who signed these, after three days' consideration, to be regarded as duly bound to their observance. These articles were not to be construed as in any way affecting those who had conscientious scruples against bearing arms, or any person who had not freely signed them. No person under twenty-one years, nor bound servant nor indentured apprentice, could be enlisted without the consent of his parent or master.

Companies were not to be marched more than three days from the inhabited parts of the province, nor be detained more than three weeks in any garrison, without their written consent first voluntarily given. This bill did not compel the inhabitants to arm, but merely encouraged their voluntary association for defence. Still, troops were organized under if, and sent to the north-western frontier (under charge of Benjamin Franklin), where they were occupied during the winter of 1755-56 in erecting stockade forts, until discharged in February, 1756,

Three companies were organized at Easton, Pa., by December twenty-fifth, 1755, while the Governor informed the Council on December twenty-ninth that there were then in the city of Philadelphia nine companies of militia and one company of artillery.

Neither Canadians nor Roman Catholics were allowed to enlist in any of these companies.

The following shows the rates of pay allowed at this time by the province:

Lieutenant-colonel, 17s. per day; major, 15s. per day; captain, 10s. per day; lieutenant, 5s. 6d. per day; ensign, 4s. per day; chaplain, 6s. 8d. per day; surgeon, 7s. 6d. per day; commissary of stores, 10s. per day; paymaster, 10s. per day; provisions, 5s. per week (estimated for 1,400 men); sergeant 2s. per day; corporal, 1s. 8d. per day; privates, 45s. per month (1,200 estimated).

The annual expenditures for the paid forces of the province was estimated at £64,655. The force provided for in 1757 was only 1,000 men, notwithstanding the fact that danger was pressing from both the north and the west. This deficiency was made up by the ranging companies, which maintained themselves throughout these troublous times, and materially aided the pioneers in retaining possession of the homes which they had chosen.

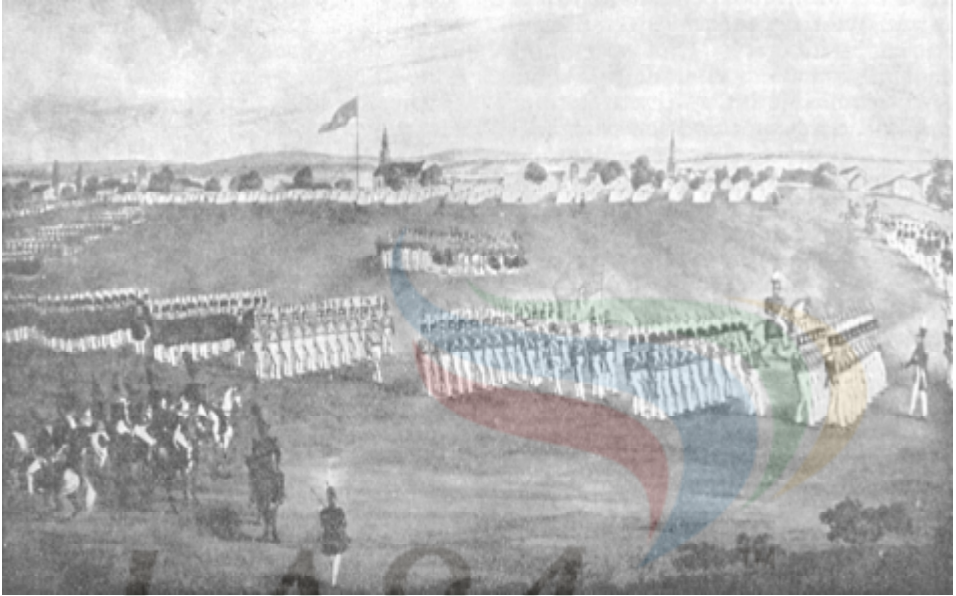
These ranging companies served without pay, asking only that the province should supply them with ammunition. During this year the raising of troops for service in New York was authorized, though on account of the continued disputes between the Governor and the Assembly, none were raised, and nothing of importance was accomplished for the defence of the colony, which was unable to protect itself, beyond establishing a chain of posts.

The continued incursions of the Indians from the French stronghold of Fort Du Quesne, rendered the reduction of that place most vitally important. Preparations for the work were not completed till the summer of 1758, when Brigadier-General Forbes was placed in command of 7,850 men for this purpose; his command included 2,700 Pennsylvanians. Through various causes the main portion of this force was delayed at Raystown till September, Colonel Bouquet being sent in advance to Loyal Hanna, from which point Major Grant was sent to reconnoiter towards Fort Du Quesne with 800 men. The French and Indians surrounded this force, capturing Major Grant, and killing, wounding and taking prisoners 300 of his men. Encouraged by this success, they attacked Colonel Bouquet at Loyal Hanna, on the eleventh of October, but were repulsed. General Forbes arrived nearly two weeks later, with the remainder of his forces, and, on the seventeenth of November the advance was again resumed, reaching the vicinity of Fort Du Quesne on the twenty-fourth of that month, when the French destroyed their works, and retreated. The place was occupied by General Forbes' command on the twenty-fifth and, after being hastily repaired, was garrisoned by 450 men, partly Pennsylvania provincials. The expedition then returned, and the men were discharged.

During 1759 and 1760 so little had occurred of importance in Pennsylvania, that at the end of 1760 the whole of the paid forces raised by that province had been discharged, except 150 men. In the following year the Assembly would consent to a levy of 500 men only upon the

Pennsylvania troops until 1774, when a threatened uprising of Indians and the troubles with Virginia, over boundaries, brought the Westmoreland County Rangers into service for a brief period,

The first ripples preceding the storm of revolution, which was soon to sweep



CAMP LAFAYETTE, 1841.

condition that they should not be sent beyond the limits of the province.

The militia saw no more active service till 1763, when an expedition of about 300 men marched against some small Indian villages, drove away the occupants, and destroyed their crops.

In July of this year, Colonel Bouquet successfully accomplished the relief of the troops at Forts Ligonier and Pitt (Du Quesne), which had been besieged by Indians.

In 1764, a fresh expedition under Colonel Bouquet was undertaken against the western Indians. A bill for raising troops for this was approved by the Governor in May, but men were not obtained till August, when they assembled at Carlisle and began their march which brought them, on October twenty-fifth, to the forks of the Muskingum River, in the heart of the hostile Indian country, and compelled the Indians to sue for peace and deliver up their captives (more than two hundred in number). This expedition gave peace to the

over the colonies, began to be felt in this year; the long conflicts which the Assembly had waged with the several Governors, over their encroachments upon the liberties of the people, had gradually led up to a desire for similar action regarding the acts of the mother country, with a firm resolution to resist the latter as they had the former.

Early in 1774 meetings were held, and resolutions passed looking to a union of the colonies, as a safeguard of the liberties of the people, and to forcible resistance against British injustice; committees were also appointed to act for the people as emergencies might require. In December following larger committees with greater powers were elected, from which, under the pressure of events, a general "Committee of Safety" was evolved. Early in 1775 local associations began to come into existence in the several counties, which were the foundation of the "Associated Battalions" in the Revolutionary War.

As an example of these associations, I

will quote from the proceedings of one which met in May, 1775: "The following association was then proposed, and being read, paragraph by paragraph, was unanimously agreed to, . . . viz.: "Whereas, the enemies of Great Britain and America have resolved, by force of arms, to carry into execution the most unjust, tyrannical and cruel edicts of the British Parliament, and reduce the free-born sons of America to a state of vassalage, and have flattered themselves, from our unacquaintance with military discipline, that we should become an easy prey to them, or tamely submit and bend our necks to the yoke prepared for us: We do most solemnly agree and associate, under the deepest sense of our duty to God, our country, ourselves and posterity, to defend and protect the rights of this and our sister colonies, with our lives and our fortunes to the utmost of our abilities. And the

An account was also taken of the powder in the stores of the country; in the case of the county above quoted from, thirty-one casks were found, which would be sold to the committee at £15 per cwt. Articles of association, in many respects similar to articles of war, were proposed by the Committee of Safety in August, 1775, and were adopted by the signers as rapidly as possible. From the proceedings of local associations the following is taken, which will answer for all:

"August 31st, 1775. Articles of Association.

"In order to make ourselves perfect in the art military, we the subscribers have associated and severally agree, promise, and resolve as follows, viz.:

"Second. That none of the subscribers shall disobey the orders of either of the officers while under arms or in



CAMP KOSCIUSKO, 1842.

better to enable us so to do, we will use our utmost diligence to acquaint ourselves with military discipline and the art of war. We do further agree to divide ourselves into companies not exceeding one hundred men each, and to elect and choose such persons as the majority of each company shall think proper for officers."

actual service, under the penalty of not exceeding twenty shillings.

"Third. That each person of the company shall provide himself with a good gun or musket, a cartouch box, or shot bag and powder horn, a half a pound of powder and two pounds of lead.

"Fifth. That no person of the said

company shall appear drunk, or curse or swear whilst under arms, under a penalty of three shillings.

"Ninth, That the company shall not be obliged to march out of the province without the consent of the majority of the soldiers.

"Eleventh, The association to continue for eight months."

The articles of association were to be signed by the commanders of battalions, when they should be chosen, after which formality they were to take full effect. In a short time the signatures of fifty three battalion commanders were duly placed beneath the articles. These battalions were formed from the following local associations, viz.: two City of Philadelphia, six Philadelphia County, four Bucks County, five Chester County, five York County, eight Lancaster County, four Cumberland County, five Berks County, four Northampton County, two Bedford County, three Northumberland County, and two Westmoreland County.

The most strenuous efforts were made to secure arms for the militia, and old muskets which had been stored (and well nigh forgotten) since the expedition to Fort Du Quesne, were hunted out and overhauled: they were found to consist "of barrels mostly without locks and stocks, and all of them so covered with rust that they were thought almost unfit for use, and scarcely worth repairing. . . . By the help of some old locks, which about this time were found in a garret (without an owner), and were distributed among them," some of the poorer men obtained arms which would "serve them to exercise with. There are a few, indeed, of the best of the firelocks which we think could safely be trusted to for real service." All the gunsmiths of the country were required to devote their time and labor to the work of repairing firelocks and making bayonets, under penalty of having their tools taken from them, and their names posted as enemies to their country.

Full and complete lists were made of all the non-associators in the several townships; all serviceable arms and ammunition found in their possession were seized for use of the military, while a constant surveillance was exercised over them; and for any treasonable language or conduct on their part, which might be reported to the local committee, as well as for failure to deliver up

their arms, they were brought before the committee and summarily dealt with.

From the associated battalions thus formed, drafts were made to fill such requisitions for troops as Congress from time to time made upon the colony.

On May fifth, 1776, a County Committee from nineteen townships met at Carlisle, and voted to take into pay, arm and discipline five hundred men, ready to march on the first emergency, and expressed willingness to raise two thousand if they had the support of the province.

A convention of delegates from the associated battalions met in Lancaster July fourth, 1776, elected two brigadier-generals (Daniel Roberdeau and James Ewing), and then resolved that the brigadier-generals should have full power and authority to call out any number of the associators; also that they would march under the direction and command of their brigadiers to the assistance of all or any of the free independent States of America.

Within ten days after the receipt of news of the Battle of Bunker Hill the First Regiment of Pennsylvania Riflemen had completed their organization, and marched with nearly eight hundred men, reaching the vicinity of Boston in the latter part of July, 1775. These were the first troops to arrive from south of the Hudson, were remarkable for the accuracy of their aim, and in January, 1776, became the "First Regiment of the Army of the United Colonies, commanded by Gen. George Washington." Two companies of this regiment were with Arnold's expedition to Quebec.

Under calls from the Continental Congress five battalions were organized in 1775, and a sixth in February, 1776, which were sent to the front, part to Canada and the Hudson, and the rest to the main army. Among the curious and entertaining things recorded in the old "Orderly Books" of one of these battalions is the following order of Colonel Wayne (afterward General) . . . "The men to be under arms at nine o'clock, with their cartouch boxes, powder-horns, etc., in order to be inspected. Every non-commissioned officer or soldier who shall come to the parade dirty, with a long beard, or his breeches knees open, shall be mulcted of a day's allowance of provisions, and do a double tour of duty." For the

Colonel lays it down as a preposition that "every soldier who neglects to appear as decent as the nature of his situation will admit, is unfit for gentlemen's company, and is a coward." Fifteen hundred men were also raised in February and March for the defence of the colony, but the Congress making a requisition upon the colony for six thousand men in June, as its quota towards the formation of a flying camp, these troops were at once transferred to the Continental service, and four thousand five hundred additional men (nine battalions) were organized from the associated militia, thus completing its quota. This body of troops was very badly cut up in the disastrous engagement on Long Island in August, 1776, losing heavily in prisoners as well as killed and wounded; the remnants after the battle were consolidated into six battalions and stationed at Fort Washington, where they were all captured when the fort was surrendered in the following November. The portion of the original six battalions which joined the main army, participated in the battle of Long Island, and in the retreat across New Jersey which followed that disaster.

The two companies which had been raised for the protection of Wyoming Valley by Captains Durkee and Ransom were called to the main army at this juncture, though their services were greatly needed at home, and their departure left the valley in a most exposed condition. In addition to the troops above enumerated, an independent troop of cavalry from Pennsylvania (The First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry) which had been organized in 1774, and was employed on many important duties during 1775 and 1776, took part in the retreat across New Jersey, and participating with conspicuous gallantry in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, received a letter of thanks from General Washington himself for their valuable services in the campaign. (This troop has maintained its organization until the present time. It took part in the battles of Brandywine and Germantown, and performed much other valuable service during the Revolution, of which the limits article forbid more extended mention.)

To repair the losses of this campaign a bounty was offered to volunteers of

£10. The pay to privates at this time was £2 10s. per month, and the rations furnished the troops consisted of one pound of beef, one and a quarter pound of bread, one gill of whiskey and a small quantity of salt.

The practical working of this association system was found to be productive of much inconvenience. Whenever it was thought necessary to call upon the associators to meet a threatened danger, *all* were obliged to respond; so many false alarms were raised, and the associators, after assembling and marching for days, were so frequently met by messengers announcing that the danger was past, that they finally grew weary of their task, and declined to respond. This led to the passage of a law by the Assembly, organizing a militia and appointing a "Board of War," with nine members, to assist in carrying out its provisions. Under this law the militia was divided into eight classes, which could be called out separately for service.

Some of the incidents attending this reorganization must have been amusing. One colonel reports of his regiment (May, 1777), that two companies failed to choose officers. In one company all wanted to be officers, and in the other all wanted to be privates—none would accept commissions.

The demonstration of General Howe towards Philadelphia in July, 1777, called out one class of the new militia for service, which took part in the battle of Brandywine, where they distinguished themselves, as well as at Paoli and Germantown.

The winter of 1777-78 was passed by the Pennsylvanians at Valley Forge with Washington. Every schoolboy has read in his history of the hardships endured in this cantonment, but the following pen picture (taken from a report made to the President and Council) is so vivid that I am constrained to give it space, to remind the present generation of the sufferings patiently endured by our ancestors for our benefit:

"Barefooted, naked, and miserable beyond expression, several brave soldiers having nothing more than a piece of old tent to shield them from the inclemency of the season, and not more than one blanket to six or perhaps eight men. Very few indeed are in any wise fit for duty." But the hardships of that

time must have been partially forgotten in the joy of seeing Philadelphia evacuated in 1778, as well as in following the British across New Jersey, striking them at Monmouth, and finally cooping them up in New York city.

The depredations of Indians from the north and west compelled the sending of an expedition under General Sullivan, in 1779, to carry war into the country of the Six Nations.

Unlike Braddock's expedition, this force moved with all the precautions taught by long experience in Indian warfare, with large flanking parties on either side, and scouts and riflemen well in advance. The Pennsylvania column (consisting of Major Parr's rifle corps, General Clinton's division, the brigades of Generals Hand, Maxwell and Parr, and Proctor's artillery), encountered the enemy near Newtown on the Chemung River, defeating them after a long contest. The Indians numbered thirteen hundred, under the leadership of Brant, assisted by two hundred and fifty Tories.

Following up this advantage, General Sullivan ravaged the entire country of the Senecas and Cayugas, destroying forty towns and one hundred and sixty thousand bushels of corn. While the expedition performed the duty assigned it in a most thorough manner, it failed to put a stop to the incursions of the Indians, which continued to be made by small parties, requiring the constant presence of ranging companies and garrisons in the various forts and block-houses until the close of the war (as well as for years thereafter).

In March, 1780, a law was passed reorganizing the entire militia system. The militia was divided into classes as before; fines were imposed for non-attendance at muster—the price of three days' labor for officers and one and one-half days' for non-commissioned officers and privates; when called out for active service, the pay of privates was to be equal to that paid for a day's labor; persons called out, but failing to respond or send a substitute, were fined the price of a day's labor for each day of service, and fifteen shillings for £100 on their estates. Pensions were also promised to those wounded in battle, and to the families of those killed.

An expedition against the British in New York was planned for the summer

of 1780, to take part in which four thousand militia were ordered out, to rendezvous at Trenton; but the expedition failed to start, and the troops were dismissed in September.

On New Year's Day, 1781, the memorable revolt of the "Pennsylvania line" broke out. The "line" left its camp under the leadership of its sergeants, and marched to Princeton, after one of its officers had been accidentally killed in the attempt to prevent them. The causes which led to this were numerous, but the principal were, first, dissatisfaction with some of their officers; second, the depreciation in the value of their pay; third, the fact that they were suffering for supplies with which other troops were furnished by their several colonies; and fourth, the attempt to hold them to service, under their enlistment "for three years or during the war," after the expiration of three years. Negotiations were opened by General Wayne with a committee of sergeants appointed by the men, and the trouble was settled in seven days without further bloodshed.

A committee of three persons was appointed to examine into the terms of enlistment of the men, and those found entitled to discharge were to be discharged; bounties were to be adjusted by commissioners; auditors were to be appointed, and depreciation of pay settled by certificates, while arrears of pay would be made good as soon as possible; a pair of shoes, overalls and a shirt to be given to each soldier; no one to be punished for participating in the revolt; all of which terms were duly carried out. After leaving their camp, however unjustifiable their conduct was in doing so, the men are entitled to the credit of behaving in a most orderly manner, as well as refusing most tempting offers from the British in New York, and delivering to General Wayne the men who had brought these offers. The men were undoubtedly patriots at heart, although the methods they employed to secure redress of their grievances were most reprehensible.

The main army was sent to the south in February, 1781, but three thousand militia were called out and encamped at Newtown, Bucks County, where they remained till October.